

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 114837  
ORIGIN NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 CA-01 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /084 R

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NEA:RNEUMANN

-----027566 051712Z /53

P 051607Z MAY 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, AF

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOLLOWING IS EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING ON  
MAY 4:

Q. THEREWEREREPORTS OF 10,000 DEAD, 8,000 DEAD IN THE  
PAST FEW DAYS. DOES THE EMBASSY HAVE A FIGURE?

A. GEORGE, I DON'T HAVE A FIGURE ON CASUALTIES. I CAN TELL  
YOU THAT NO AMERICANS WERE INVOLVED. THERE ARE NO  
AMERICAN CASUALTIES.

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PAGE 02 STATE 114837

Q. CAN YOU TAKE A QUESTION? THERE HAVE BEEN SOME REPORTS  
THAT THE PREVIOUS AFGHAN GOVERNMENT HAD, ON TWO OR THREE  
OCCASIONS, IN THE LAST YEAR ASKED US WHETHER WE WOULD IN-  
CREASE, OR WHETHER WE COULD INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF MONEY  
WE WERE PROVIDING, WHICH I THINK WAS AROUND HALF A MILLION  
DOLLARS, FOR FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING, AND THAT IT HAD

BEEN TURNED DOWN ON TWO OF THOSE OCCASIONS BY THE WHITE HOUSE, OR BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT. CAN YOU CHECK INTO WHETHER THOSE ARE --

A. I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU ANYTHING

SPECIFICALLY ON WHAT REQUESTS OR TURNDOWNS THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN. ALL I CAN REITERATE FOR YOU IS SOMETHING WAS POSTED THE OTHER DAY HAVING TO DO WITH WHAT THE LEVEL OF ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS.

Q. I'M AWARE OF WHAT THE LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE WAS, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW --

A. I'M NOT SAYING THAT I COULD GET ANYTHING FOR YOU ON A DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE LIKE THAT.

Q. HODDING SAID YESTERDAY THAT YOU WERE GOING TO STUDY THE ORIENTATION OF THIS NEW GOVERNMENT. HAVE YOU GOT ANY CLUES TO THE ORIENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT?

A. I THINK THE QUESTION HAD TO DO WITH, OBVIOUSLY, THE COMMUNIST LINK. WE DO KNOW THAT A NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN AFGHANISTAN HAVE BEEN NAMED TO TOP GOVERNMENT POSITIONS INCLUDING THAT OF THE PRESIDENT. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, YET KNOW WHAT POLICIES THE NEW GOVERNMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 114837

WILL FOLLOW, AND I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CHARACTERIZE THE GOVERNMENT UNTIL WE DO KNOW MORE ABOUT THOSE POLICIES.

Q. WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU STUDYING ABOUT U.S. RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN AT THIS STAGE?

A. WELL, WE'RE LOOKING AT OUR PAST RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM. WE WANT TO FIND OUT MORE WHAT THE COMPOSITION AND THE ORIENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT IS AND WILL BE.

Q. IS THERE ANY CONSIDERATION OF THE BREAK OF RELATIONS, OF A RUPTURE, IN THE CASE THAT THE SUSPICIONS ARE CONFIRMED?

A. NO. I WOULDN'T GO INTO ANY KIND OF SPECIFICATION OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS. I WOULD JUST SAY THAT WE STILL HAVE THE QUESTION UNDER STUDY.

Q. HAVE WE CALLED AMBASSADOR ELIOT HOME?

A. NOT THAT I'M AWARE OF.

Q. WILL YOU TAKE THAT QUESTION?

A. YES, I'LL TAKE THAT.

Q. CAN HE GET OUT OF THE EMBASSY? SERIOUSLY.

A. LET ME ANSWER THAT QUESTION. BORDERS ARE NOW OPEN AND

NORMAL AIR SERVICE HAS RESUMED, SO TOURISTS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO LEAVE, FOR EXAMPLE.

Q. IS THERE STILL AN AFGHANI GUARD ON THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, REFUSING ENTRANCE TO TRUCKS AND GUARDS?

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PAGE 04 STATE 114837

A. I'M NOT AWARE OF THAT.

Q. TAKE IT, PLEASE?

A. YES, I WILL.

Q. KEN, EVANS AND NOVAK SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE PLOT AGAINST THE PREVIOUS AFGHANI GOVERNMENT WAS HATCHED IN THE SOVIET UNION, AND THE CARTER GOVERNMENT HAS CONVENIENTLY DECIDED TO IGNORE THIS FACT. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ABOUT THIS BEING INSPIRED IN MOSCOW?

A. I DO NOT, GEORGE.

Q. DOES MOSCOW'S RECOGNITION OF THE NEW AFGHANI REGIME HAVE ANY EFFECT ON YOUR STUDYING?

A. NO.

G. THANK YOU. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Subject:** DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOLLOWING IS EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING ON MAY 4  
**TAGS:** SOPN, PINS, AF, US  
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